

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) Data acquisition, storage and delivery apparatus for acquiring and storing communications usage data from a plurality of communication resources for delivery to management systems, comprising [[a]] networked computing means on which is provided:

an acquisition agent which gathers [[with access to]] usage data on communications activities by monitoring [[from]] a plurality of different communications resources;

a storage agent arranged to store communications usage data from said plurality of communications resources for a configurable period of time; and

a delivery agent arranged to deliver communications usage data to a subscribing management system, wherein

said usage data is delivered immediately over a communications link to said subscribing management system when said communications link is available; and

said usage data is only retained when said communications link fails.

2. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the communications resources are selected from a group consisting of PBX telephone systems, IP telephony systems, email servers, proxy servers, firewalls, switches, routers, web servers and mobile telephony.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A method of acquiring, storing and delivering data from a plurality of different communications resources for delivery to management systems, comprising the steps of:

gathering and storing communications usage data from said plurality of communications resources, and

delivering said communications usage data immediately over a communications link to a subscribing management system when said communications link is available; and

retaining said usage data for a configurable period of time only when said communications link fails.

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the communications resources are selected from a group consisting of PBX telephone systems, IP telephony systems, email servers, proxy servers, firewalls, switches, routers, web servers and mobile telephony.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) Data acquisition, storage and delivery apparatus, comprising a networked computing means, on which is provided an acquisition agent with access to usage data from a plurality of different communications resources;

a storage agent arranged to store communications usage data from said plurality of communications resources; and

a delivery agent arranged to deliver communications usage data to a subscribing management system, wherein

said usage data is pushed to the subscribing management systems when a threshold is reached.

12. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the communications resources are selected from a group consisting of PBX telephone systems, IP telephony systems, email servers, proxy servers, firewalls, switches, routers, web servers and mobile telephony.

13. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the usage data is retained for a configurable period of time.

14. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the usage data is retained for up to a configurable data file size.

15. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the usage data is retained when the communications link fails.

16. (Previously Presented) A method of acquiring, storing and delivering data from a plurality of different communications resources, comprising the steps of

storing communications usage data from said plurality of communications resources; and

delivering said communications usage data to a subscribing management system by pushing said data when a threshold is reached.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16, wherein the communications resources are selected from a group consisting of PBX telephone systems, IP telephony systems, email servers, proxy servers, firewalls, switches, routers, web servers and mobile telephony.

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of retaining the usage data for a configurable period of time.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of retaining the usage data for up to a configurable data file size.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of retaining the usage data when the communication link fails.

21. (Previously Presented) Data acquisition, storage and delivery apparatus, comprising a networked computing means on which is provided:

an acquisition agent with access to usage data from a plurality of different communications resources;

a storage agent arranged to store communications usage data from said plurality of communications resources; and

a delivery agent arranged to deliver communications usage data to a subscribing management system, the delivery agent being configured to employ the following delivery techniques:

(a) immediate data forwarding whereby the usage data is immediately forwarded to the subscribing management system immediately as it is received by the acquisition agent;

(b) polled data forwarding whereby the usage data is forwarded to the subscribing management system in response to a request by the subscribing management system; and

(c) push data forwarding whereby the usage data is forwarded to the subscribing management system when a time or data size threshold is reached;

wherein said storage agent is configured to retain data for a configurable period of time, the configurable time being determined by the delivery technique employed by the delivery agent.